

**Island County Board of Health
Regular Meeting - Monday, June 15, 2009
Minutes**

Members Present: Commissioners: John Dean, Helen Price Johnson and Angie Homola; Jim Slowik, Mayor of Oak Harbor; Roger S. Case, MD, Executive Secretary to the Board; and, Captain James Thralls, MSC, U.S. Navy, Ex-Officio Member.

Members Absent: Anne Tarrant, Whidbey General Hospital Commissioner.

Call to Order: The Chair, Jim Slowik, called this Regular Meeting of the Island County Board of Health to order at 1:15 p.m.

Additions or Changes to the Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Dean called for the approval of the minutes for the May 18, 2009 Regular Meeting as submitted. Commissioner Price Johnson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Presentation: Region 1 PHEPR (Public Health Emergency Preparedness Response) Synopsis – 6/4/09 SARS Exercise

Keith Higman advised that today's presentation was about a part of public health that goes on behind the scenes. It is only when there is an emergency that involves the public that the planning for such events shows. One of his goals with this presentation is to use a June 4th exercise as an example of how the health department trains and prepares for real events and to describe how that event came to be, how we participated and what we learned. Second, to share with the Board models of response which are quite different than the "normal" way we do day to day business. In the case of a public health emergency, authority positions may be different due to who has the expertise under an emergency response scenario. The Health Department, as an agency, has been working statewide under what is called public health emergency preparedness and response. This preparation is done regionally and Island County Health Department (ICHHD) is in Region 1 with Snohomish as the lead county.

The four goals of the exercise were: (1) Test the Health Department's ability to initiate a timely investigation; (2) Measure the ability to inform community partners as appropriate; (3) Assess the Health Department's communicable disease capacity, and; (4) Demonstrate the Health Department's ability to initiate a call center. Keith went on to describe the Incident Command Center (ICS) model and how this model applies to reacting to emergencies. Keith went on to describe the 6/4 exercise which was sponsored by Region 1.

Keith described the hypothetical communicable disease scenario which the regional planners presented to initiate the exercise and went on to detail the day's events as staff responded to the evolving mock event. It became evident very quickly that Health staff were overwhelmed operating within the existing infrastructure. At that point, Dr. Case called the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and initiated an Incident Command (ICS). Dr. Case advised the Board that, in the event of an actual event, the EOC would be activated as a result of the Board of Health declaring an emergency. Health staff reacted all day to events unfolding under this scenario with a regional representative was on site all day observing.

Both an internal and regional debrief was done at the conclusion of the exercise. Internally, there was good communication across the Health Department, timely response to investigations and good resource sharing. The internal team thought that the ICS should have been implemented earlier in the exercise. Most glaring was an inability to establish a much needed call center in the EOC due to lack of capacity to do the set-up. Central Services is being consulted to correct that issue. The regional representative's observation was much less critical and reported very good communication, timely case work processing and good management strategies reacting to events. The Health Department intends to continue to work on communication, to continue to evaluate when active surveillance crosses over into a larger emergent event, and continue communications with partners who might be needed to coordinate provision of vital services such as assuring the availability of clean drinking water and assuring food supply.

Contracts:

Keith Higman presented the following contracts for consideration:

1. DSHS – WorkFirst
Contract No. 0963-65888
Contract Amount: \$ 2,000
2. DSHS – Apple Health for Kids Outreach
Contract No. 0963-66413
Contract Amount: \$ Fee for Service

Commissioner Homola moved for approval of both of the contracts as presented. Commissioner Price Johnson seconded and the Board approved the motion unanimously.

Health Department Report: Keith advised the Board that he had been talking with the BICC about changes to the State's vaccine purchase program driven by cost cutting measures. Individuals that have private insurance will not be able to receive State purchased vaccine through the Health Department and will have to seek those immunization services through their private provider. Keith updated the Board that Island County had three suspected H1N1 cases but two were not specifically H1N1 and the 3rd was not flu at all. Our role is to continue provide accurate communication to the community.

Public Input or Comments: David Macys, Oak Harbor, addressed the Board saying the he was gratified that there was support for emergency preparedness training and was also pleased that this Board and the Board of County Commissioners were making tough decisions to keep a balanced budget. Commissioner Price Johnson thanked Environmental Health staff for their work with the public regarding the newly initiated on-site inspection fee. Mayor Slowik commented on the success of the 'AHAB' siren alarm system in Oak Harbor.

Adjourn: There being no further business for the Board, Commissioner Price Johnson adjourned the meeting at 2:12 p.m. The next Board of Health will be at Regular Meeting on Monday, July 20, 2009.

Submitted: _____
Roger S. Case, MD, Executive Secretary to the Board

Minutes approved this 20th day of July 2009
ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Jim Slowik, Chair